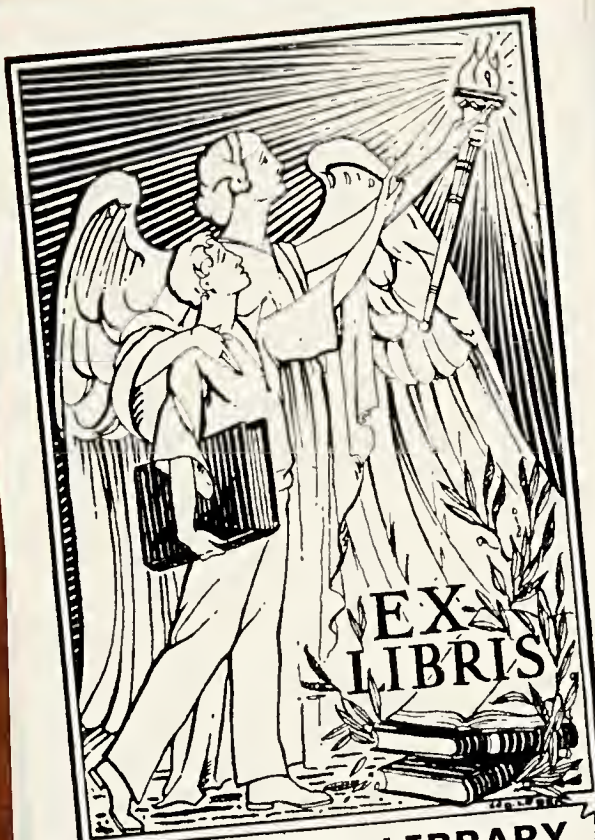


HAMILTON
OUT OF THE DARKNESS

Borchardt, B. F.

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HOUSE FOR THE BLIND

OUT OF THE DARKNESS

By B. F. Borchardt

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TWENTY years ago, within the environs of Tampa, Florida, a backwater swamp brooded; a morass of cypress trees and dense foliage exhaling noxious and miasmatic vapors. The river flowed poisonously along its edge—"a hopeless waste."

One day two natives passing over the county bridge looked down on the first signs of human activity in the swamp. Some of the underbrush had been cut and, at intervals, fence posts were laid.

"Whut do you know about that! Some-buddy's clearin' in the bayhead. Whut dy'e allow he's aimin' to do? Looks like he might've picked hisself out a more likely piece of ground."

The men were mystified and amused.

"Does at that," the other answered, "I reckon it's some damn yankee who'll clean it up and get rich."

The damn yankee, working in some heavy growth within earshot, laughed off the "damn," and that night told his wife of the prophecy.

He had not *seen* the men. He had not looked on a human countenance in over fifty years. As an infant of three, the great gift of physical sight had been snatched from him; his life darkened before it had fairly begun.

Three years of primary impressions, soon lost by those of us who have "sight," were caught within his shuttered house to be expanded into a vast beautiful world—a world more beautiful perhaps than you or I with our limited physical vision, can ever know; a world as boundless as soul.

By the vision of that "blind" man the Florida swamp has blossomed into a dream world.

Through the jungle, winding roads were cut so that majestic trees might escape the ax so rarely withheld by men who "see"; mud sinks cleared and deepened to form picturesque pools, the banks planted with flowers and ferns; or the natural growth pruned and preserved. Small channels to the river give outlet to these basins of beauty.

Charming cottages nestle among the trees, following the curves of the road. Their sites accommodate gracious trees, their architecture reflecting the variety of form and color envisioned by this so-called "blind man."

In these live the neighbors and friends of James P. Hamilton—cast by the tragic circumstance of poverty, and the age into which he was born, for the role of "a blind beggar."

His own home, a red brick mansion, is surrounded by two acres over which cypress trees stand sentinel. A centenarian oak enfolds the house of this sightless tree lover in grateful arms. There are bright rock gardens and a perfect carpet of grass, as inviting to the eye as the oriental rugs within.

The river holds the estate in the crook of an elbow, and one may toss a cookie from the cozy sun-parlor into the passing stream.

Invited without ceremony to his porch swing, our host said with the smile of a happy man: "It holds eight people."

He was not surprised when, haltingly, I explained my mission. Interviews are a matter-of-course to achievers.



Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton before
their stone fireplace

The Tragic Accident

Born in Big Rapids, Michigan, in October, 1871, the son of a Methodist minister, Mr. Hamilton lost his sight at three by falling with a pair of shears in his hand. One of the blades pierced his right eye-ball, and within a month he had totally lost the sight of both eyes.

His father accepted the fact of his son's blindness with the meekness that became his calling, repeating: "Thy will be done," thus putting the blame and the burden on God.

Not so his mother. Though deeply religious, she was of the stern old Puritan type that came to this country to seek religious freedom and began burning witches. Holding tenaciously to the hope that an operation later in life would restore the boy's sight, she kept him buoyed with that thought.

To her stoicism, her bravery, her refusal to accept defeat, Mr. Hamilton credits the fearless independence of his life.

"She would not allow me to become dependent," he said. "She used to send me to the grocery store to purchase articles; though there were four other children to do the chores and errands. She forced me to develop the fighting spirit. Insisted on my going with other children. Playing, even wrestling with them; sent me on nutting expeditions into the woods. And it was years before I knew she wept each time I left the house."

Until he was ten years old, little James was taught at home by his father and mother. She, having been a teacher before marriage, not only saw that he received instruction equivalent to that provided by the graded schools; but also that he stayed outdoors a great deal. In every respect she trained him to be a normal boy; discouraged him from becoming introspective or diffident.

Though he could not play baseball or other games requiring sight, he could wrestle. And he became so proficient that in later years he was able to win the title of intercollegiate

wrestling champion of Michigan. An honor unique in the annals of the sport.

A Fighting Mother

"Education for the blind was not compulsory at that time; nor for many years afterward," Mr. Hamilton said reflectively, "Parents would bring their children to the blind schools; but so great was their grief at parting, that often they would take the children back home to become adult wards of charity. My mother left me."

Years later Mr. Hamilton was instrumental in getting legislation through for the compulsory training of the blind in Michigan. And institutions for the blind are now rather generally on this basis in other states.

"There is a much greater movement now under way," said Mr. Hamilton, "to send blind children to schools with those who see. Text-books in braille from the national library can be purchased, or borrowed. This experiment is being tried in the larger cities, Cleveland being the leader. Of course, the pupils must first learn to read braille. Blind children overcome a great deal of their self-consciousness, shyness and sense of inferiority by associating with those in full possession of their faculties."

Young James found an average run of youngsters in the Michigan School for the Blind. The bolder spirits, he among them, swam in the river when there was still ice along the fringes; ice-skated in winter, roller-skated in summer and spent hours in the gymnasium. Here it was that he greatly improved his natural talent for wrestling.

"We were not little blind angels," Mr. Hamilton smiled. "Our favorite way of stocking up on apples for winter was to make a camouflaged attack on the school orchard. We saved eight letters from home—there were eight teachers in the faculty—and eight boys, each armed with his letter, would go at a pre-arranged time, to a teacher to have the letter read aloud, thus occupying the at-

tention of all the teachers while others slipped out to garner a supply of apples for our trunks."

Picturing those little blind bandits one can easily imagine that a teacher, casting an eye out of the window, choked in the middle of a sentence, shed a pious tear, and went on reading to the poor little trickster before him.

A strong bond of affection grew up between teachers and pupils that lasted the rest of their lives. Mr. Hamilton still hears from one of his teachers living in Sarnia, Ontario, now seventy-eight years of age.

An Earner at Ten

It was at the blind school that young James earned his first money. The school paid

on. He always wound up with an earnest exhortation that *a blind person could do anything any other person could*, if he only *thought* he could. This idea was drilled into our minds."

Mr. Hamilton still cherishes the thrill of importance and pride that filled his ten-year-old breast at being taken into the confidence of a full-fledged inventor, smiling over the inspired dreams that lingered in a young mind uninterrupted by the diversions of sight.

James redoubled his energies toward overcoming the handicap of fate. Some day he would *see!* And then what glories would be his! What victories! "Some day" . . . the doctors had promised his mother.

chestra. James played the clarinet in this group.

Romance Enters

Of summers the boys went home to their anxious and loving families. On one of these home-comings he went to a church social with his sister, filled with joy and contentment at being back again with his family. He was listening with rapt attention to the musical program. Two young, wholesome voices presently rang out in a duet. The voice of one curled into his heart, a shaft of song. Immediately he was in love.

Little Carrie Young and her sister were the singers. James had his sister introduce him, and thereafter, during the vacation, he



Large Rock Garden and Lily Pool on the Hamilton Estate.

twenty-five cents a cord for sawing firewood and the superintendent, James F. McElroy, conceived the idea of letting those pupils who could be trusted not to cut themselves, make this money.

A cross-cut saw still affords Mr. Hamilton an outlet for some of his boundless energy.

McElroy was an untiring professional inventor—mainly of electrical appliances—who, by means of the income derived as superintendent of the institution, was enabled to carry on many of his experiments. He was later to become head of the Consolidated Car Heating Company, one of the major industrial concerns of the country.

One day the superintendent sent for James.

"I came with trepidation," recalls Mr. Hamilton, "thinking that I was being called on the carpet. Instead, Mr. McElroy enthusiastically explained to me the intricacies of a two-way electrical switch he had just perfected. After that he called me in many times to discuss inventions he was working

Preparation for Life

During his eight years at the school for the blind, two major trades were taught—broom-making and piano-tuning—in addition to the essentials of a high school education. James also learned the use of woodworking tools, later doing a lot of fine cabinet work.

"That chair over there," he paused and pointed accurately, "I made forty years ago. It was the only one to stand two weeks of constant soaking when the river submerged us three years ago."

The sight of that chair, chaste in design, perfect in craftsmanship is disconcerting.

Tuning was taught by a blind instructor. The boys were first taught to get notes with a tuning fork. As the work advanced they took pianos down and repaired them, and when they became proficient, were put in charge of the twelve pianos of the school.

Piano playing was also taught, as well as other musical instruments in the school or-

did not miss a church social, Sunday school session or party where the young lady might be present. She was complete mistress of his thoughts. He went back to school in the throes of a violent puppy-love.

The Fight Is On

Now he must redouble his efforts; become most proficient in whatever he did.

He must earn money to go to Europe where he could consult the best specialists. At that time Berlin was the medical center of the universe. Berlin was his goal. "*Nach Berlin*" his constant thought.

He was then eighteen years of age, very much in love with life and with Carrie Young. . . . Physically strong and full of hope.

And now came the first grim realization of his handicap.

Racing Against Time

He began to toil at broom-making, earning \$3.00 every ten days.

"I saw I could not waste my time at this,"

Mr. Hamilton briskly remarked. "There were then no officials or organizations interested in finding work for the blind, and the trades open to them were virtually nil. And sighted piano-tuners were using every argument against the employing of blind tuners. Said they: 'The blind tuners scratch and mar



Mr. Hamilton in his garden.

the finish of your piano and are liable to wreck it for you.'"

But young Jim hadn't come of stock that gives up. He went back to the blind school to get some finishing touches on piano tuning. He practiced almost unceasingly. Taking pianos apart. Putting them together again. Gaining celerity in the work. Gaining speed!

Speed was the dominant thought now. Speed to earn more money. His vitality and, more important, his love of the work favored him. And back of these was the inspiration of his mother and Carrie Young.

His plans were well formulated. Leaving school his obsession was still speed. The greater number of pianos tuned per day, the more money he would have for the great main objective.

He decided that experience and practice in a factory would make him more swift and efficient; and in addition give him prestige.

No Place for the Blind

At that time no factories employed blind tuners.

He applied to the Chase Brothers Piano Company at Muskegon. Begged for but a week's trial. They politely but firmly refused. Again and again he tried to gain entre, without success.

He perceived it would require "pull." His father was well acquainted with H. A. Hackley, millionaire lumberman and stockholder of the piano company. The minister called on Hackley in behalf of his son, and thus, won the coveted week's trial.

From seven in the morning until after five in the evenings he worked at the factory, tuning an average of ten pianos a day.

It is a record he is still proud of.

He walked three miles each way to and from work, through the severe winter of Northern Michigan, to save car fares. He tuned pianos, caned chairs and sawed wood after hours, to save money—and earn more.

The factory paid him \$6.00 a week for the first month; the second month they raised him to \$8.00; then to \$10.00.

At this peak he quit at the end of six months. By that time he was so proficient and rapid that he could easily earn five to six dollars a day, his earnings sometimes running as high as \$30.00 a day.

The Great Adventure

He saved up \$600.00 and in 1892, being just twenty-one, sailed for Europe. Landing at Hamburg, he went immediately to Berlin. Taking residence with the family of a Colonel in the German army, he began to study ways and means of securing the best diagnosis and treatment the capital offered.

The kindly family aided him in this, and as they had a son of his age, he did not lack for company. The two exchanged lessons in languages, German for English.

Young James not only pictured himself returning to the States in triumph, his sight restored, but also a linguist with first-hand knowledge of the manners and customs of the countries he had visited.

He had long ago selected teaching as his career and every move, consciously or otherwise, was directed to this end.

He offered himself at the Medical College of the University of Berlin for clinical study, and in due course of time was examined by the famous Dr. Schwaeger, internationally known oculist and professor of the college.

The doctor made a brief but thorough examination.

The Awful Verdict

Nothing could be done for him. The nerves had atrophied. The matter was hopeless.

"It was the end of all things," Mr. Hamilton said quietly, recalling this bitterest moment of his life.

He wanted to return home immediately to the solace of loved ones. But too vivid was the picture, now rudely shattered, of himself as a happy family man; angelic Carrie Young by his side.

He could not bring himself to ask her to marry him. Even though she might accept, he loved her too much to make her the bride of a man doomed to eternal darkness. . . .

On His Way Out

Gradually, as a man convalescing from a severe illness, he began to get a grip on himself. He sought to bury his terrific disappointment in work and study.

He tuned pianos for the great conservatories of Berlin, not for pay but for their recommendations.

The kindly German family helped him to forget. The Colonel took him to hear the bombastic Kaiser Wilhelm rant about the heaven-born destiny of the Fatherland.

Knapsack on back, James and the Colonel's lad went on a hiking tour of the Prussian provinces of Silesia; stopping wherever they happened to be for the night; sleeping in stables, or putting up with peasant families. Gloriously roughing it.

James was a living question-mark. He interrogated everyone he met as to their modes of life.

He delved into methods of caring for the blind, and found that they were much better provided for in Germany than in America. Cities created monopolies for them in certain trades, such, for instance, as basket-weaving—an important item in European life. A firm would have the exclusive right to manufacture willow baskets, provided blind labor only was employed. Thus other competition in that locality was cut off.

Among other things, he discovered that the doctrine of brotherly love in Germany was confined within itself. A child being asked how Germany was bounded was supposed to make the stock answer: "By enemies."

Returning to Berlin with a ripper knowledge both of the language and people, James regularly visited the libraries and read all the books in braille that he could possibly absorb.

At the end of his year in Germany—studying and using that tongue exclusively—he spoke German like a native. An Englishman who had lived there nine years and spoke the language most indifferently, regarded him as a miracle.

But the miracle of James Hamilton is one inherent in all men—the gift from God to achieve.

From Berlin he went to Lausanne in Switzerland on the banks of the beautiful Lake Geneva, there to feel with Alice Cary:

"My soul is full of whispered song,
My blindness is my sight;
The shadows that I feared so long
Are full of life and light."

In Switzerland he entered the school for the blind, took lessons from a private tutor and majored in French. As in Berlin, he tuned for the conservatories to win their praise. For individuals, to pay his expenses.

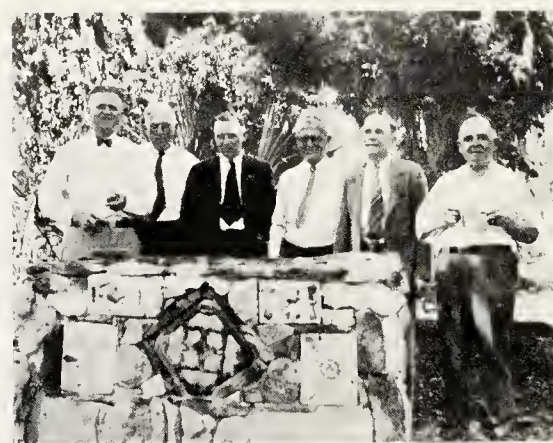
So many impressions poured into his shuttered house that upon his return home at twenty-two he lectured on "*What a Blind Man Sees in Europe.*"

Homeward Bound

He had gone to Europe in 1892; he returned in '93, the year of the Chicago World's Fair, having crowded a lifetime of knowledge and experience, for the average "sighted" man, into a year.

The ship on which he sailed, was itself a floating exposition. Cossack troops and their mounts. Continental orchestras. A suave Frenchman in charge of an art exhibit. A retired Italian sea captain, seventy years of age; unquestioned monarch of four or five islands in the South seas upon which he had plantations. The Captain had been to Paris to secure reparations from the French government for the unwarranted or negligent firing on his kingdom by a French battleship.

He was returning with the compensation in his pocket. And beside him, a beautiful bride



Outdoor Fireplace at Hamilton Heath, built of stones and relics from all over the world. The square in the center is a tile ventilator from China.

—an Australian girl of English descent, just turned twenty.

Four Alsatian boys on their way to take up land in New Mexico had their seats flanking him in the dining salon. These boys talked only German and James cheerfully undertook to see that their wants were understood and attended to, this affording him further opportunity to practice their tongue.

Diagonally from him were the Italian nabob and his wife. The bride spoke no

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The Mystery of the Lost Land Plantation

RESUME OF PART I

By Peter Lorang

ILLUSTRATED BY PETER EIKELAND

"OUT here," Dr. Blaize said musingly, "a man disappears—a shrug of the shoulder, a gesture toward the convenient sea—but once in a blue moon that is not the end of the matter."

"As in the case of Henri De Loque's twin brother?" suggested Boyd.

"And Henri's wife, Marie."

Coming out on the train that morning, I had noticed the man because of his terrible emaciation, his curiously dead face and fiercely living eyes. As we boarded the trim boat waiting in the canal to take us to Lost Land Plantation, he was introduced to Boyd and me by Edward De Loque, owner of the *Vale*.

A Doctor of Philosophy, Blaize lived on La Petite Isle, a toe of land sliced from Lost Land Plantation by a storm that had devastated the Louisiana coast twenty-five years ago—at which time Louis De Loque had lost his life.

An accumulation of mysterious, even tragic, occurrences had brought Edward De Loque up to New Orleans, the previous day, to engage the services of Professor Benjamin Boyd who had gained renown through solving several murder cases that had baffled the police.

The mystery of Lost Land—its ghost music, the hideous apparition that had haunted the house for fifteen years—had recently culminated in a sinister note which accused Henri De Loque, head of the house, of murdering his twin brother, Louis, stealing Louis' inheritance and his sweetheart.

Restitution was demanded through a messenger who would shortly arrive at Lost Land Plantation. Failure would mean death.

The note was marked by French mannerisms and Spencerian flourishes, revealing to Boyd's keen perceptions, a man who had learned first to write in French, then come under the Spencerian influence, thus giving the writer's nativity and approximate age.

And, as if to emphasize the threat, a Mulatto servant named Dan who slept in Henri De Loque's room had, the following morning, been found dead, all windows latched, the door locked and the key on the outside. A curious strangling odor had filled the room.

"Peter," Boyd said, after Edward De Loque had left with our promise to accompany him to Lost Land, "why do you suppose young De Loque lied about not recognizing the handwriting in that note?"

"Oh no, he didn't write it, but he knows who did," he said in answer to my question.

Having bought my decaying mansion in the Vieux Carrié, Boyd had retained me as his personal physician and companion. A delver into the mysteries of the mind, he was greatly excited over the strange, not to say diabolical complexities of this case.

After almost a day of travel through the canal

and over Barataria Bay, Edward De Loque sent us up to the manor house saying his brother was expecting us.

We were admitted to the gloom of the seventeenth century castle by a savage-faced old Indian woman who left us to wait in a magnificent but depressing room.

Attracted by the snapping of fingers in the hall, Boyd and I saw the woman on the stair put her fingers to her lips in signal of silence, whereupon she ran down without noticing that we had witnessed her pantomime.

Boyd pushed open a door which led to a passage back of the drawing room in time to catch a glimpse of a woman and a man disappearing beyond another door.

We crossed the passage and entered a small sitting room just as a beautiful girl of about twenty and two nuns were ushered in by a little Chinaman.

The girl introduced the nuns. "Sister Aloysia and Sister Cleo," she smiled. "And I am Eugénie De Loque, daughter of Mr. Louis De Loque. We are a week early because Mother Superior is sailing for Rome next week and she wanted me to be safe in my father's care before she left."

Scarcely had we recovered our stupefaction before a huge emaciated man charged in demanding an explanation of our presence.

Quietly Boyd explained our position and introduced the nuns.

"And," he concluded with watchful emphasis, "this is Miss Eugénie De Loque, your brother Louis' daughter."

"What! What's that? It's a lie. Louis is dead. He never had a daughter. She's an im-

OUT OF THE DARKNESS

(Continued from Page 9)

Italian, the nabob, no English, so the compromise tongue was French.

On the second day out, the Captain becoming bored expressed a desire to find a chess opponent of his mettle. James told the Captain he was his man.

"Voila!" exclaimed the Captain, "I thought you were a Dutchman, patting away as you have been with those boys."

After dinner James brought out the chess board he had made at school, a carefully tooled affair with alternate raised squares. Very novel and interesting to the old Captain: a blind chess-player!

Having outgrown checkers at school, James had taken up chess. He had developed into an expert, outpointing some of the best chess players in Germany and Switzerland. The game had served as an escape from the stress of his disappointment.

The Captain was an inveterate player and the two put in many hours playing on deck. As they mulled over their moves, the young wife read aloud to them in French. At times when the chess board had been put up for the time being, she read to James in English.

INSPIRATION

James confided his innermost thoughts to the young wife. How might a man, hopelessly blind, declare his love for the girl of his choice? Would it be right, should she out of the generosity of her heart accept him, to inflict her with his handicap? Would it be a proper expression of sincere love to let her make this sacrifice?

The lady was sympathetic. She convinced him that he should by all means follow his heart; that he should not allow his sense of inferiority to grow.

"When you say that no woman will have you, you are being cynical. And you are very much mistaken. You are an interesting man. So interesting that one loses sight of your sightlessness. Your first objective after you reach the States should be to get married."

This advice, coming from a beautifully educated woman, was a stimulus that did much to direct his life into the channels of a normal life, and save him from the misanthropy that might have been his.

HOME AGAIN

Back home in Michigan again, he devoted himself with renewed ardor to his studies, his goal still being to become a teacher. His sweetheart was not yet out of high school.

He entered Albion College, earning his way by means of tuning pianos, teaching wrestling in the gymnasium, and lecturing on his European travels.

He was at Albion for two years. Many of the chums and acquaintances made at Albion were to be customers for his pianos in later years, in addition to becoming firm friends for life.

There was an abundance of piano tuning, including the large musical conservatory. Moreover, his job offered an opportunity of entering the homes of the faculty and becoming intimately acquainted with them.

COMPLETION

Albion days over, the great event of his life occurred. He married Carrie Young. She was color and light and life to him. She was sunshine on the meadows, and the glint of snow on the hills. Immediately after the marriage ceremony they left for a honeymoon in Europe. A trip he had dreamed, saved and worked like fury to make a reality.

GOLDEN DAYS

They went first to Glasgow and the Walter Scott country. Then to Inverness to visit the home of Mr. Hamilton's father's family. Then to Edinburgh and from Edinburgh to Hamburg and Berlin. They remained there

six weeks, he renewing acquaintances, and introducing his wife to the friends who had been so considerate of him.

The blind man was "seeing" much of Europe on this trip.

From Berlin they went to Dresden, Vienna, Trieste, then to Athens.

There they joined a most interesting group of people, mostly college folk, engaged in archeology; also in preparing the site for the first of the Olympic games—Athens being naturally selected as first host.

Mr. Hamilton began improving his knowledge of Greek at the source, finding that the language had changed remarkably little in 2,000 years.

"Less than English has changed in the 400 years from Chaucer down," he says.

Benjamin Ide Wheeler, later to become president of the University of California, was teaching in the American Archeology School there, and aiding in the inauguration of the Olympic games.

Being a friend of the Queen of Greece and welcomed at Court, Wheeler told her about the blind scholar and his wife, stressing the fact that, though handicapped both by lack of sight and funds, Hamilton had not only earned a good living while getting an education, but was able to travel abroad and study.

A ROYAL COMMAND

The Queen was greatly impressed. It was hard for her to understand this, inasmuch as the indigent blind of Greece were all beggars.

She sent for Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton and made them at home at the royal palace.

In the course of time she made them a proposal that she would advance the funds for a school for the blind, to be established in Athens, provided they would take charge of it.

Upon consideration, this offer was declined. And after their studies in language and archeology were completed, they returned to America.

A FULL LIFE

Mr. Hamilton found, upon his return to America, that piano tuning and trading was a very fruitful field of endeavor. Pianos were much in vogue and no home was complete without one.

A large clientele was developing that depended on him to select their instruments. It was necessary to appoint agents—blind ones wherever practicable. He trained them.

Sales were made from catalogues. The pianos were shipped from the factory, thus saving expensive overhead, also giving him time, money and opportunity to take post-graduate work at the University of Michigan, where he and his wife lived and studied from 1896 to 1899.

At the end of that time he was convinced that he should continue in the piano business rather than teach.

After leaving the University he was engaged principally in this work; but he found time to take a hand in civic affairs, and to further the cause of the blind in the legislature.

His name became prominently identified with this movement, not only in Michigan, but nationally in the circles of corrections and charities.

This activity and the ardor with which he had tackled it, and his known integrity, led to his appointment by the Governor as Superintendent of the Employment Institution for the Blind at Saginaw, Michigan, in 1903, for which the money had been appropriated.

But the project was as yet incomplete. And the blind Superintendent became the supervisor of more than \$100,000 of building construction. He did the job so honestly and efficiently that the state saved thirty per cent more than if politicians had charge of it.

Meanwhile, his piano business was carried on largely through agents and brought a comfortable income in addition to his salary as Superintendent.

In 1908, after five fruitful years, Mr. Hamilton left the institution.

Now widely known in the field of education for the blind, he was invited to the National Convention of the Association of Corrections and Charities, held in Minneapolis in 1906, as one of the principal speakers with Senator Albert Beveridge and William Taft.

His speech was on the employment of the blind, a cause he had ceaselessly espoused.

A. O. Jones, an inventor, then engaged in laying carpets at a meager salary, came to him with the proposal that if he would advance the preliminary finances to manufacture his project—a side-wall heating register—the profits would be equally divided. Thus Mr. Hamilton and his brother-in-law became the founders of the United States Register Company.

The project was an instantaneous success and in the second year of operation it was paying ten per cent on the stock. From an humble beginning it grew to be one of the large manufacturing concerns of Michigan. It never failed to pay high dividends—seventy per cent in one year.

At one time the representative of a competitive company in New York called on Jones and offered him three million dollars for his fifty-one per cent of the stock. He made no offer for the remaining forty-nine per cent held by Hamilton and his brother-in-law, it being understood that they would be frozen out.

Jones, to his everlasting credit, indignantly refused to sell.

Being in comfortable financial circumstances, James Hamilton now began considering a home in a milder climate.

HAMILTON HEATH

His dream world was assuming shape and definiteness. A place on a river, adjacent to a main highroad, and not too far from a city. Such a place he visualized and found in a Florida swamp.

There were thirteen acres in the tract. A park expert spent weeks in laying out the roads, rock pools and gardens, just as the owner saw it in his mind's eye. Gum, magnolia and bay trees, with their eloquent scents, were preserved, and they and the live oaks are hosts to a large squirrel family that scamper over the place and come to the owner when he goes out, even searching his pockets for peanuts.

The City of Tampa grew out to the dream world. Mr. Hamilton sold and developed all but two and one-half acres of the tract. But finding the renter or buyer first, then building to suit individual tastes, he surrounded himself with congenial people.

There is an air of friendliness hovering over Hamilton Heath that no visitor misses, whether he be of humble or of international importance. A wholehearted welcome is his. . . . The blind philosopher has a delightful sense of humor, and withal, the accuracy of knowledge of one who had seen every-

Finally you realize that he has lit up his darkened house with an inward light; that out of the trees, his lotus pools and rock gardens, and the calm river which he tells you "rivals the Nile for beauty," he has built up a world of form and color within himself. One hard to translate into terms of the average "sighted" man, but which is none the less real.

Mr. Hamilton walks about his estate with an assured step which is amazing. He knows every turn in every path, pauses at the beauty spots so that you may admire them, talking to you about the plants with the intimate knowledge of the gardener.

"Wealth was not my goal," he smiled. "A normal happy life was all I asked of God; all I set myself to achieve."



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...and the Tree Shall Bear Fruit

At the banquet given by the Supreme Lodge to all who attended the initiation of the President, which was held at the Washington Hotel on the evening of February 19th, many wonderful speeches were given which tugged at the hearts of all present as each speaker poured forth his feelings of the momentous occasion of the afternoon. One of the most inspirational expressions was rendered by John Lee Smith, Supreme Representative of Texas and Deputy Supreme Chancellor and his speech given at that dinner is recorded herewith:

Deputy Supreme Chancellor Lustig, Supreme Lodge Officers, and Brother Knights:

I appreciate your generous words of introduction and am fully aware that I in no sense merit them. I am con-



JOHN LEE SMITH

vinced that they were prompted to expression by our distinguished toastmaster out of a sense of Pythian charity.

As I look about me on this notable group of Pythians and reflect on the significance of this historic hour I am caused to wonder why such good fortune came to a country lawyer from a far away West Texas cow town as to be privileged in participating in the ceremonies initiating the President of the United States into the Knights of Pythias. Perhaps because I do hail from a small lodge on the distant frontier of Pythianism I appreciate such an honor all the more.

Such an experience as was ours today comes seldom in the life of any man. Never before has a ruler of this mighty republic, while acting as such, ascended the beautiful stairway of our Pythian mysteries. The occasion is doubly significant. Seventy-two years ago, almost at this hour, five young men—all of them humble and unknown men—assumed the obligations of Pythian Knighthood not far from this banquet hall, and thus set in motion the tremendous movement toward true human brotherhood which we call Pythianism today. From that small vibration in the vast sea of humanity, unnoticed at the time, has swelled a great tide of unselfish charity and fellowship that has filled untold thousands of homes that were dark and desolate with the bright flood-light of human sympathy; that has sustained the widow in her grief, stilled the wail of the weary orphan and fed his hungry little body, and smoothed the cold pillow of death for the comrade whose

eyes were closing into the last long sleep. In this manner Pythianism has made itself and its divine energy felt in all this broad land. Is it any wonder that today, after seventy-two years of life, she awakened the honest admiration not only of the humble but of those who sit in the seats of the mighty?

As I reflect upon her growth from such an humble beginning to such a pre-eminent place of achievement I am reminded of one of the giant Sequoia trees that grow in Fred Jones' home state of California. One of the largest of these trees, the General Sherman, towers to a height of 292 feet and has the enormous diameter of 35 feet. It is the largest living thing on this planet, and the oldest! The botanist tells us that it is more than 5,000 years old. When the great empires of antiquity were being born, in the beautiful mountain valleys of California a little acorn burst from its prison walls and thrust its tender leaves upward toward the sun. Ages passed and the towers of old Babylon soared, stood awhile, and then crumbled and fell and a nation died and was buried in the sandy silence of Mesopotamia, but the little tree climbed onward toward the sun. The tall summits of the Pyramids were lifted upon the horizon of history by those matchless builders of old Egypt. But their builders died and their nation vanished after three thousand years of imperial life. And the young Sequoia, vibrant with life, lived on. The matchless Greek with his deathless art adorned the Acropolis with splendor and beauty; the stern Roman carved out his vast empire, spanned Europe and Asia with splendid highways, erected his triumphal arches, and then with his co-partner the Greek, slept quietly in the graveyard of the nations. But a mighty Sequoia out beneath the sunny skies of California still lifted his strong arms, leafy with beauty, upward toward the sun! The ages slowly passed by like watches in a long night of waiting and an inspired sailor set his small craft westward from Palos to explore the trackless wastes of an unknown ocean. At the end of his voyage he found America more than four centuries ago, and in the far west of that America upon which he gazed, strong with the strength of many ages, beaten by the storms of centuries the giant Sequoia still kept vigil with the snow peaks of California. Today that tree still lives. It is a mighty and vital monument to the eternal in life when properly incarnated. It is not a hot house plant. Tempests have beaten upon it, storms have raged about it, and its strong body has wrestled with the fury of the hurricane. The lightning with blazing shaft has struck it but the great tree stands on and greets each spring time with the green promise on its mighty arms of a desire to live, a desire that time does not quench.

And somehow tonight I compare the Knights of Pythias with that great tree. If in our hearts the great eternal truths of God are emplant, and we transmit those truths to those who follow after us in the Paths of Pythianism our great order cannot die, for she will have in her heart that eternal youth that laughs at the changing seasons and the biting blast, and lives on and on, because within her spacious domain dwells the spirit of the God of Human Brotherhood.

Pythian Brotherhood

Preceding the initiation of President Roosevelt, Supreme Vice-Chancellor Fred H. Jones delivered a radio speech over a national hook-up, which is printed herewith for those who were not privileged to hear this radio address.

Less than three-quarters of a century ago, in an humble cottage on the shore of Lake Superior, there came to a youthful school teacher the inspiration which was the germ of the Order of Knights of Pythias. Since his early boyhood the romantic story of the lives of the young soldier and the senator of Syracuse had held for him peculiar fascination.

The story of their marvelous friendship had, indeed, for more than twenty centuries been the theme of wondering admiration in every land where dauntless valor evoked the esteem of man, and fidelity was reckoned among the virtues; but it was reserved for Justus H. Rathbone to thereon found a fraternity, whose far-reaching influences do more than fame of brush, or pen of poet to exemplify and perpetuate the teachings of the friendship which held Damon and Pythias to each other—a friendship which could smile its serene scorn of a tyrant's threats, and see without a tremor the baleful glitter of the headsman's axe.

The ritual prepared in a quiet Michigan village, without assistance and with no previous knowledge of such work—for its author had then barely reached his majority, and had never been a member of any secret society—was the foundation whereon has since been erected the magnificent superstructure known as the Order of Knights of Pythias.

Unused for several years, Mr. Rathbone made his manuscript serviceable when, after his removal to Washington City to serve his country he, for the first time, found it feasible to execute his long-cherished plan of founding a fraternal society on the story of the friendship of the two Syracusans. He "built better than he knew;" for it is scarcely possible that when, on the evening of the nineteenth of February, 1864, he organized the first lodge of Knights of Pythias, he could have imagined that he was founding an order which would extend its jurisdiction over every state and territory of America, but also throughout the Dominion of Canada, and number on its roster hundreds of thousands of names of men who have consecrated their lives to the practice of fraternity.

The growth and prosperity of the order whose anniversary we commemorate today have indeed been marvelous. Ushered into existence in the midst of the throes of civil war, when all social ties had been disrupted, the time seemed the most inauspicious possible for the organization and perpetuation of a society founded on the broad principles of fraternity, friendship, charity and benevolence.

Eminently practical in its objects and thoroughly business-like in its methods, it possesses a ritual which, for elegance of diction, as well as in the value of the profound truths that it teaches, and the great moral lessons which it inculcates, is not surpassed by that of any other fraternity in existence.

The order was founded solely and only to disseminate the great principles of Friendship, Charity and Benevolence. Nothing of a sectarian or political character is permitted within the portals of our lodge room. Tolerance of religion, obedience to law, and loyalty to our flag and to our government, are its cardinal principles.

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The Evolution and Birth of a Great Order

(Continued from page 15)

Owing to the condition of his health he could no longer do much work, and was soon in destitute circumstances. Through the influence of some of his literary friends an appeal for aid was made through the press. Public meetings were held and subscriptions taken in London, Dublin and Kilkenny, and "liberal sums" were forwarded to him. This enabled him to pay his debts and to go to Paris for treatment. He spent two years in Paris under the care of eminent physicians, who finally pronounced his case incurable. When he found there was no hope of recovery, life in Paris became painful to him.

He longed for his old home, and on May 10, 1835, he commenced the long, tedious journey to Kilkenny.

While en route, his friends in Dublin staged a benefit performance for him in the Theatre Royal—"The Sergeant's Wife," dramatized by Banim, which played to a crowded house. He returned to his old home in Kilkenny in September, 1835, and was received warmly by his countrymen, who presented him with a silver snuffbox containing eighty-five pounds.

A few months after his return home the Queen bestowed a pension of fifty pounds per annum on him. Never was royal bounty more needed or bestowed on a more helpless claimant. The boon relieved his pecuniary anxiety and helped to smooth his pathway to the grave.

In July, 1842, he quietly and peacefully passed away. And thus passed from life one of God's noblemen—a man among men.

Michael Banim, in summing up the accomplishments of his brother, tersely says:

"The range and quality of his genius as a writer I leave to more disinterested parties than myself to ascertain and define. I think I may claim for him, however, numerous amiable qualities, springing directly from the heart, the seat of affections; and many valuable qualities emanating from the head, the formator of character.

"His affections were ardent, impulsive, and uncalculating. He was industrious, persevering, and self-reliant, so long as his physical capabilities enabled him to be so.

"It will be borne in mind that he died while yet young, and that, for fully thirteen years preceding his demise, the physique of his mental power was not in health, nor the full force of his mind at his command. At forty-four, his age when he died, men of genius begin to train the flights of imagination and fancy within the scope of reason, to prune exuberances, and to contrast with judgment.

"I think I may affirm that, had it pleased Providence to have given him health during the thirteen years he was an ailing and incapable aspirant for fame and independence, and to have prolonged his life until he had descended even but little from the summit of existence which he had not reached, he would have made good way towards the goal he had marked out ultimately to reach. I am confident that, had health and life been his, he would have advanced much closer than he did to 'Fame's Magnetic Altar'—the bourne to be attained, as expressed in one of his early rhymes."

In speaking of the death of his first love, Michael Banim continues:

"I still think that the peculiar ailment causing death, and which for some time baffled the skill of the most eminent medical men, had its origin at the period of his early calamity. I judge that his brain was then injured, and that the subsequent overworking of the seat of thought brought on the spinal disease, which first paralyzed his limbs, and finally extinguished his life."

Following the death of John Banim, his daughter Mary, who had been

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